



City of San Diego

Offices of Council President Tony Young,
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NEW REFORMS, LESS RED TAPE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Regulatory Relief initiative continues to make San Diego more business friendly

SAN DIEGO – To celebrate “Small Business Week,” San Diego elected officials, industry leaders and small business owners today gathered to highlight successes in cutting red tape at City Hall and announce new initiatives designed to help local companies grow and create jobs.

Last fall, the San Diego City Council held a Regulatory Relief workshop where the public could suggest ways to make the city more business friendly. Participants offered close to 60 ideas. So far more than half of those suggestions have been or are in the process of being implemented, including the:

- Hiring of a small business liaison to help small business owners navigate the permitting process.
- Streamlining the budget process and improving transparency for Business Improvement Districts to make it easier for them to reinvest in their neighborhoods and support local economic activity.
- Improving the city’s web functions so more forms and bills can be filled out and submitted online.

The San Diego City Council also created the Economic Development and Strategies Committee to help follow-up on all the Regulatory Relief suggestions and serve as a forum for the business community to provide further feedback.

“We didn’t just stuff all those suggestions in a drawer. We took them seriously and are working hard to put them into action,” said Councilmember Lightner, who chairs the Economic Development and Strategies Committee. “But there is more to do. We want to hear from local business owners about how the City of San Diego can help them so they can reinvest in our communities and create jobs.”

Council President Young, who along with Councilmember Lorie Zapf sponsored last fall’s Regulatory Relief workshop, stressed the need for an ongoing dialogue between the City of San Diego and business owners.

To help facilitate that conversation, Council President Young said that the City Council will hold another Regulatory Relief workshop. Also, the Economic Development and Strategies Committee recently set up an email address regreliefsd@sandiego.gov where the public also can send suggestions on how to improve city functions for businesses.

“Small businesses are the backbone of our local economy and we want to continue looking for ways to knock down many of the barriers that they face when trying to get established, grow and add more jobs,” said Council President Young. “We’re looking forward to hearing from the business community about even more ways to make it easier to do business right here in San Diego.”

Councilmember Lorie Zapf, who chairs the Land Use and Housing Committee, pointed to her committee’s work in developing policies that cleaned up outdated regulations such as allowing private businesses to use energy-efficient exterior lighting as well as creating stakeholder working groups to help streamline the regulations for restaurants.

“When we ask the community to bring forward suggestions for reform, it isn’t lip service,” Councilmember Zapf said. “We are serious, and we are getting things done.”

“San Diego businesses are seeing real results thanks to regulatory relief,” said Council President Pro Tem Kevin Faulconer. “Some city fees are being reduced or, in the case of restaurants that want to feature live entertainment, eliminated altogether, saving eateries \$1,500 to \$4,000 each year.”

The group also unveiled new initiatives designed to help small businesses thrive. They include:

- Creating satellite, after-hour building permit consultations and reviews making it more convenient to get projects approved.
- Streamlining the permitting process for restaurateurs so that it takes less time to open a new eatery.
- Adding staff and support resources for the city’s economic development activities with a focus on workforce development and training.

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